

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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SUBJECT	Medical Facilities and Health Conditions in Leningrad	DATE DISTR.	26 August 1953
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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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HOUSING CONDITIONS

1.

This section of the city was newly built and had five-story buildings with one, two, three, and four-room apartments. Kitchens and lavatories were shared in common by several families. Our building had only German residents, but Soviet-occupied apartment houses surrounded it. Usually a family was assigned two rooms as living space. The city was quite modern and perhaps not representative of the USSR, with respect to living conditions, for it is my impression that the remainder of the country, with the exception of Moscow, was in a very backward state.

FOOD SUPPLY

2. There was no shortage of food in the city, but there were scarcities of certain types of food. Rice was scarce, and no flour could be purchased except before holidays. The average meal consisted of potatoes, black bread, and sauerkraut. Meats and fish were very expensive. Bread was usually made from rye flour, although there were many kinds of white bread, and occasionally graham flour bread. Bread always contained water, and the cheapest variety always contained a large amount of water.

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3. Vegetables commonly seen were cabbage, carrots, and beets. These were usually served in a soup. Fat sources were sunflower seed oil, or rarely olive oil, but the latter was very expensive. Pasteurized milk was sold in bottles at the local stores. It could also be purchased unpasteurized in bulk at the hosedoor. All milk sellers, even the house-to-house type, had to show a ticket stating that their animals had passed a health inspection. I got the impression that cows in the areas always had some sickness, but I don't know what type of sickness was most common, except that it might have been a bovine tuberculosis. This did not prevent the owners from selling the milk of these animals.
4. Meat of all varieties except veal was sold in the markets. This meat had to bear a stamp of approval which could be obtained from a special office located on a market place. Meat sellers always queued up before this office to obtain the approval stamp on the spot. I do not know what was required to get this prompt approval. All kinds of fish were sold on the market place, particularly salted or smoked fish. Fish was not cheap, and cost about twice as much as meat.
5. Food shops were very clean. Food was displayed in glass cases and in refrigerated compartments. Restaurants were also clean, even the "stolovaya" or snack-stands from which small food items for immediate eating could be purchased. Food inspection laws existed and were apparently enforced. No spoiled foodstuffs were accepted by the people and anyone selling such food could be punished.

DISEASES PREVALENT

6. The only serious disease problem was tuberculosis, which was apparently widespread in Leningrad. The Soviets were always careful to check all maternity hospital patients for venereal diseases, and this may have been because of the existence of a venereal disease problem in Leningrad. Some cases of diphtheria and, rarely, typhoid fever were reported. In recent months, outbreaks of scarlet fever occurred. Infectious hepatitis was frequently reported. [] people with this disease were sent to a sanatorium in the Black Sea area.
7. No dysentery problem existed. Food was officially checked, and the people were advised concerning washing of foods. Food poisoning was rare but sometimes occurred. [] foot and mouth disease in cattle began to be a problem during [] years in Leningrad. Rabies was feared, and the health authorities were able to administer a serum at once to anyone bitten by dogs. I know of no other animal diseases in the Leningrad area.

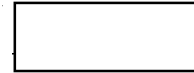
MEDICAL CARE

8. The institute [] had a dispensary or med-punkt staffed by a doctor and four nurses. Only minor care was available here, and although at first a dentist was on duty in recent months this was no longer true. Minor bandaging was performed and application of heat lamps was possible, but no real care could be obtained at this dispensary.
9. Our neighborhood had two polyclinics, one for adults and one for children. These were staffed by experts whom the Germans considered too specialized and not capable. However, special clinics for all sections of medicine were available in the city, to which patients could be referred when necessary.

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DRUG SUPPLIES

10. I have no information on this subject except that penicillin could be regularly obtained, except at the end of the month when it became very scarce. Sulfa drugs could always be purchased on a state recognized black market.

BLOOD PLASMA SUPPLY

11. I have no information on medical training, research, or development in Leningrad. I heard no propaganda advocating blood donations nor of the use of blood plasma substitutes in the city hospitals. Blood transfusions were regularly administered in maternity hospitals.

BACTERIA WARFARE AND CHEMICAL WARFARE

12. I heard nothing of BW and CW offense or defense plans or official discussions about these subjects except for the anti-American propaganda attributing the use of BW in Korea to Americans.

SAFETY REGULATIONS

13. I have no information on the existence of safety engineer posts in Soviet plants, nor of the existence of safety regulations.

WATER SUPPLY

14. Our apartment area had a water supply system, but I know of no central waterworks in the city, nor from what sources the water was derived. It might have come from Lake Ladoga. I noticed that it had a chlorine flavor and was quite hard. I know nothing of its treatment. It was recommended that drinking water be boiled before use, and this was usually done. All kinds of mineral waters could be purchased in the city if one preferred to drink them. Flavored waters were always on sale and drinking water could be obtained in this form. The area always had an adequate supply of water even during the summer months.

WASTE DISPOSAL

15. The area had a sewage disposal system, but I know no details about the Leningrad system. Garbage disposal was taken care of very regularly by a special pickup service.

ANIMALS

16. The area had no mosquitoes or lice. There were many flies, bugs, and fleas, and the streetcars were filled with small bugs. DDT was made available to combat these insects, as well as a liquid called "anti-klopin". No serious complaints were heard about these pests.
17. The surrounding countryside had poisonous vipers, but I can give no information on the existence of other reptiles in the Leningrad area. Our apartment house had many rats which was apparently a common thing in the area. Rat poison could be purchased in a local store.
18. I saw no stray dogs and cats, which I attribute to the attempt of the authorities to protect against rabies.

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PLANTS

19. I know nothing of the existence of poisonous or allergenic plants in the area.

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